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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH

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MEMORANDUM

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To: [   ] Chairman
Committee on Documentation, USIB

From: James A. McDevitt, CODIB Member
Department of State

Subject: Disposition of Task Team VIII Report

Reference: Committee on Documentation Minutes of the
Seventy-third Meeting, 1 June 1966

1. The amount of effort of the Task Team as evidenced by the
man-hour expenditures (more than 6,100 hours), the lapse time
(two years), and the size of the resulting report is impressive.
The report, commendable in itself, demonstrates quite clearly
that part-time, ad hoc, joint task teams are not an effective
means of designing information systems and that individual
processing problems cannot be solved outside the context of
the total information system of which they are a part. It is
also apparent from the report and the recommended studies that
the system context is not readily available.

2. While the Department cannot judge the efficacy of the specific
organizational measures proposed, it does agree with the implica-
tion of the Task Team VIII Report that the structure and management
strategy of the operating environment seriously affects the design
of the information processing system, and that this structure and
strategy should be determined, including not only what standards
are required, but whether standardization is even desirable. In
view of this, the Department is more inclined to concur in the
undertaking of the recommended studies than to concur in the one
specific standardization recommended.

3. In the circumstances, it is recommended that CODIB take the
following actions:

S E C R E T

State Department review completed

a. Turn its attention to means and appropriate mechanisms for undertaking the study actions recommended, and then to recommend appropriately to USIB.

b. Report to USIB that results to date indicate that the problem as originally tasked is inappropriate and why.

c. Make the Task Team Report, including its annexes, available to USIB and the ARC for information purposes only.

d. Request the Task Team to assist in the tasks above and to provide briefings and consultation as might be requested, but terminate the Task Team within 60 days and transfer its working files to CSS.

4. In order to assist in "a" above, the Task Team or its chairman and secretary should be asked to clarify their implementation recommendations: the report lists seven major studies and nine interim tasks whose relation to each other and to their goals needs to be better spelled out. Who is to study what? When? A rough time-phased plan should be provided. Although it would be difficult at this point for the Team or anyone else to give detailed cost figures for such studies, a time-phased plan indicating level of manpower would at least help CODIB determine, roughly, what these studies would cost in very general terms.

5. In addition, to assist CODIB in "b" above, the Team, or its chairman and secretary, should be asked to prepare a discussion of its basic conclusion that the chip problem solution development depends on actions and further studies that can best be carried out in a given management environment.

6. If, on the other hand, CODIB decides simply to delete portions of the report dealing with the over-all management strategy and structure of the ARC, the report should then be rewritten to include new recommendations on implementation of the chip standard and related measures. This would be desirable because the report deals with implementation matters in the context of its management structure proposals. To delete those proposals without a reconsideration of implementation actions and mechanisms would leave the report without any mention of how the minimum standard is to be tested, where it is to be applied, how it is to be updated and monitored, and how it is to be expanded to other functional aspects of the chip problem.

Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt